



## ROANOKE COUNTY NEWS RELEASE

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### For Immediate Release

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### Police Department Recognizes Officers, Civilians with Awards *Awards and Commendations Reflect Excellence in Public Service*

**ROANOKE COUNTY, VA (May 3, 2010)** – The Roanoke County Police department set aside time April 22 to recognize the contributions of officers and civilians that have helped keep Roanoke County a safer community for all its citizens.

The individuals recognized during the 2009 Employee Recognition Ceremony hosted by the department were all nominated by their fellow employees. These nominees were presented to the Awards committee that selected the winners.

The department also presented two civilian commendations. The first to receive a commendation was Blas Cotto, a Roanoke County General Services employee since 2005, who works in the Public Safety Center. The department cited Mr. Cotto's consistent willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty in his work to maintain the department's offices and facilities both during special events and on a daily basis.

The second civilian to receive a commendation was Yale Zimmerman. In 2009, Mr. Zimmerman came to the assistance of Officer Maffe in a potentially volatile situation involving several subjects. Mr. Zimmerman's presence helped maintain order in the situation until an additional officer arrived on scene, allowing Officer Maffe to safely apprehend a resisting subject. Mr. Zimmerman later commented that the Marine in him would not let an officer fight these subjects by himself. The department cited Mr. Zimmerman's bravery and willingness to lend Officer Maffe assistance in a potentially dangerous situation.

Donna Brown was recognized as Civilian Employee of the Year by the department. Brown works within the department as an administrative assistant for the Roanoke County Criminal Justice Academy. The department cited Brown's work with the Professional Standards Unit, various training programs, and special projects as proof of her willingness to learn and promote the department's values beyond her daily duties with the academy.

Department officers selected Sgt. Mark Tuck to receive this year's Leadership Award for his ability to serve as an effective bridge of communication from officers to supervisors and the administration while not compromising his own authority as a supervisor.

The department named Keisha Saul as Detective of the Year for her work with the department's evidence technicians and her role in teaching evidence collection classes for the Roanoke County Criminal Justice Academy. In 2009, Saul's work investigating a string of burglaries led her to identify and charge a suspect in the crimes.

Officer Eric Orange was selected as the Special Operations Officer of the Year for his work in helping to fill the gaps in service in several areas along with his normal duties as Community Policing Coordinator. In 2009, Officer Orange assisted by filling in as the School Resource Officer at Arnold R. Burton, assisted the Traffic Unit with checkpoints and radar enforcement, and assisted the Community Service Unit during the week and weekends on-call as well, allowing other officers to spend time with their families.

Uniform Officer of the Year was presented to Officer Darin Hogan for his demonstrated ability as a leader on his shift. In 2009, Officer Hogan's activity included arresting 28 DUIs, obtaining 128 warrants and serving 149 warrants, while averaging nearly three summons a day. In addition, Officer Hogan investigated a burglary that resulted in an arrest obtained by a confession through an interview.

Officer Doug Johnson has been with the police department since July of 2008 and was nominated to receive the Rookie of the Year Award for his proactive attitude and thorough investigations. In 2009, Officer Johnson investigated an assault involving juveniles, located the suspect, and obtained a confession during the suspect's interview. He and another officer were also helped solve a string of burglaries that occurred in the County in 2009.

Roanoke County Police Chief Ray Lavinder and Assistant Chief Donna Furrow were on hand at the ceremony to make the awards presentations. The department would like to recognize the efforts of all the employees who continually strive to serve the Citizens of Roanoke County and also make the department a shining example of Professional Law Enforcement services.

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Blas Cotto



Yale Zimmerman



Donna Brown



Sgt. Mark Tuck



Det. Keisha Saul



Officer Eric Orange



Officer Darin Hogan



Officer Doug Johnson